

AAFES rewards good grades

DALLAS — The “You Made the Grade” Program, the most successful coupon program in the history of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES), is about to get better.

This year, even more military family members will be rewarded for their academic efforts. In cooperation with the Procter & Gamble Company, Inc., AAFES will increase the value of the January sweepstakes drawing from \$10,000 to \$60,000.

Additional drawings for \$10,000 each will be held in April, July and October, for a grand total of \$90,000. Twenty-seven students in all will win savings bonds, and many thousands of others will take home coupon packages worth \$50 in brand-name discounts.

Started in February 2000, the “You Made the Grade” Program is designed to reward students in grades six through 12 for above-average academic achievement, and to inspire them to work that much harder.

Last year the program awarded thousands of dollars in discounts on brand-name merchandise favored by teens, and distributed \$30,000 in U.S. Savings Bonds among nine deserving students from around the world.

Students wishing to participate should bring their B-average or better report cards to their local AAFES main exchange in order to receive their coupon packages.

Sweepstakes entry forms are included in the coupon packages, and should be mailed to the address shown on the form.

Students may receive one coupon package per report card, but may enter the sweepstakes only once every three months.

See your exchange manager for details, and keep studying!

For more information, contact AAFES area manager, Anna Iosefo, at 782-4415 or 782-4416.

Air Intelligence Agency joins Air Combat Command

KELLY AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (ACCNS) — The San Antonio-based Air Intelligence Agency realigned as a primary subordinate unit under the Air Force’s Air Combat Command during special ceremonies here Feb. 1.

“This is a natural evolution,” said Gen. John Jumper, ACC commander. “It’s an idea whose time has come. This integrates our information-warfare skills and talents into the normal tactical and operational level of war just as we do fighters, bombers and others.”

Under the realignment, the 67th Information Operations Wing and 690th Information Operations Group at Kelly, and the 70th Intelligence Wing at Fort Meade, Md., fall directly under ACC’s 8th Air Force, headquartered at Barksdale AFB, La. AIA’s three centers, the National Air Intelligence Center at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio; the Air

Force Information Warfare Center at Kelly; and the Air Force Technical Applications Center at Patrick AFB, Fla., will continue to be aligned under AIA headquarters.

“We’re excited about integrating information operations as a force enhancer and a force multiplier to complement our traditional role of providing global air power for America,” said Lt. Gen. Thomas Keck, 8th Air Force commander. “AIA’s historic motto is ‘Freedom Through Vigilance.’ ISR (intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) contributes to the vigilance. Together with global aerospace and information-warfare capabilities, we encompass the vision of global vigilance, reach and power for America.”

“I believe that this ceremony represents a milestone for intelligence,” said Tim Sample, director of staff for the

House of Representatives’ Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. “I believe that this change is a tangible act by the Department of Defense to recognize that intelligence is no longer a support function. Intelligence, in my view, is an integral part of operations. It is no longer a nice to have ... it is a necessity.”

Maj. Gen. Bruce Wright, AIA commander, said the change “is the result of the Air Force’s recognition of the critical importance of AIA’s information operations mission. I think it’s probably the most historic day in the history of the capabilities that we’ve always brought to the fight.”

Wright remains in San Antonio as commander of both AIA and the Joint Information Operations Center, but with the integration assumes an added responsibility as the 8th Air Force deputy commander for information operations.

Air Force offers scholarships for medical school

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPC) — Dreaming of going to medical school? Let the Air Force help make that dream a reality.

The Air Force Personnel Center’s Physician Education Branch receives 50 scholarships every year for active-duty officer and enlisted members to attend medical school through the Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship Program. However, because of a lack of active-duty applicants, the Air Force loses about 20 opportunities for a free ride into the health profession when they annually turn back these scholarships.

According to Sharon Restivo, AFPC’s Medical School Scholarship Program Manager, only four applications have been turned in so far this year — several fewer than in years past.

“With three boards remaining in 2001, I am surprised to have received only four applications,” she said. “In years past I would have around 10 by now.”

The AFHPSP program gives active-duty, civilian, Guard and Reserve people a chance to attend a civilian medical school of their choice with Air Force sponsorship. They are commissioned as second lieutenants in the Medical Service Corps, and then placed on inactive obligated Reserve status.

The Air Force pays all tuition, books and most fees as well as gives participants a monthly stipend.

“We have three- and four-year scholarships available,” said Restivo. “Any active-duty, ROTC or Academy member that has ever dreamed of going to medical school will never have a better opportunity of making that dream come true. In the last 11

years, every cadet or active-duty member that has met a selection board received a scholarship.”

Prospective applicants must meet the following criteria to be eligible for the AFHPSP program:

— All applicants must have an unconditional acceptance letter from an accredited medical school inside the United States or Puerto Rico.

— All applicants must be at least 18 years of age, but less than 35 years of age at the time of commissioning.

— All applicants must be U.S. citizens.

After graduation, the AFHPSP participants are allowed to apply for both active duty and civilian residency programs through the Joint Services Graduate Medical Education Board. Participants in the program will incur a four-year active duty service commitment for a four-year scholarship and a three-year active duty service commitment for a three-year scholarship.

“Imagine graduating from medical school and having no student loans. Imagine being able to complete your military career and having all your dreams come true,” said Restivo. “It doesn’t get any better than this.”

Civilians, members of other services and Air Force Reservists interested in applying for the AFHPSP should call their local Air Force Health Profession recruiter. Air Force active-duty members, Air Force ROTC cadets and Air Force Academy cadets should contact Sharon Restivo at the Air Force Personnel Center at DSN 665-2638 or (800)-531-5800 for more information about this program.

United Service Organizations celebrates 60 years serving military people

SAN ANTONIO — Often referred to as a servicemember’s “home away from home,” the United Service Organizations celebrated its 60th Anniversary Sunday at a gala in Washington.

To commemorate the 60 years of service, the USO gala was packed full of celebrity entertainment and military fanfare, including a special recognition of a “hero” from each branch of the armed forces, and a special tribute to a crew member of the USS Cole.

“These are true American heroes, the best our nation has,” said John Tilelli, USO president. “They ask so little and give so much to simply serve America — to serve us.”

This year’s gala featured a presentation of the “Spirit of Hope” award, the USO’s highest and most prestigious award, to the United Services Automobile Association and Frau Helga Haub from the Great Atlantic Pacific Tea Company. They were recognized for their years of advocacy for the men and women of the armed forces.

The USO’s humble beginnings started in 1941, when America’s military was rapidly growing in response to an increasing threat, which then preceded entry into World War II.

Then President Franklin D. Roosevelt challenged six private organizations — the YMCA, YWCA, National Catholic

Community Service, the National Jewish Welfare Board, the Traveler’s Aid Association and the Salvation Army — to handle the on-leave recreation needs for armed forces people. The six organizations pooled their resources and the United Service Organizations’ — which quickly became known as the USO — was incorporated in New York state Feb. 4, 1941.

Today, there are 115 USO centers around the world, including centers in Germany, Italy, France, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Iceland, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Okinawa and Korea.

“The USO is the ‘people’s outreach to our troops and their families,’” Tilelli

said. “A legion of volunteers make up the heart of the USO.”

The USO is chartered by Congress as a non-profit charitable corporation, and is not a part of the U. S. government. It is endorsed by the president of the United States, Congress and the secretary of defense. Each president has been the honorary chairman of the USO since its inception.

“The USO charter doesn’t talk about entertainment,” Tilelli said. “It talks about improving morale, welfare, recreation and quality of life of servicemembers.”

(American Forces Press Service contributed to this story)